

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 13, are independent. Claims 1, 4 and 5 have been amended. Claims 6-17 have been added. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the Specification, and specifically at pages 18-22. No new matter has been introduced by this amendment. Changes to claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) REJECTIONS

Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatenable over U.S. Patent No. 6,216,228 to Chapman et al.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites, *inter alia*:

“...first fetching means for fetching identification information, input by a user, used for identification of a recording medium;

second fetching means for fetching a permission condition, input by the user, for permitting playback of the image information recorded on a recording medium.”
(emphasis added)

Independent claims 4 and 5 are corresponding method and recording medium claims, respectively, and are similar in scope.

As understood by Applicants U.S. Patent No. 6,216,228 to Chapman et al relates to a method and a system for controlling display of video or image data depending on content classification information, which is integrated with data by invisible digital watermarking techniques. A controller decodes the watermarked content codes and then prevents displaying of certain material, by overlaying the display with blanking data, if the codes match certain stored codes.

Applicants submit that nothing has been found in the cited portions of U.S. Patent No. 6,216,228 to Chapman et al (hereinafter, merely “Chapman”) that would teach or suggest a user inputting identification information and a user inputting a permission condition, as recited in amended claim 1.

Amended independent claims 4 and 5 are believed to be allowable for the same reasons.

Independent claim 6 recites, *inter alia*:

“...first fetching means for fetching from a store in said playback apparatus user-programmable viewing permission information, input by a user, for controlling playback from said recording medium;

second fetching means for fetching a permission condition, input by a user, for permitting playback of the image information recorded on said recording medium”
(emphasis added)

Applicants submit that nothing has been found in Chapman that would teach or suggest the features of claim 6. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 6 is allowable.

Independent claim 8 recites, *inter alia*:

“A method for controlling playback of a recording medium...

establishing a permission condition associated with a playback device, as a function of first input by a user;

...establishing a recording medium identification for each of one or more recording media, as a function of second input by the user;

wherein when the permission condition satisfies a predetermined relationship with the recording medium identification, a valid password, input by a user, is required to initiate playback of the particular recording medium." (emphasis added)

Applicants submit that Chapman does not teach or suggest the features of new claim 8. Therefore, claim 8 is believed to be patentable.

New claim 13 is a corresponding apparatus claim and is believed patentable for the same reasons.

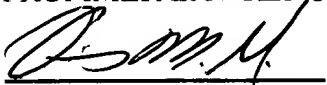
The other claims in this application are each dependent from one of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In the event the Examiner disagrees with any of the statements appearing above with respect to the disclosures in the cited references, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically indicate those portions of the references providing the basis for a contrary view.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,
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